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THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICANISTS.

BY D. G. BRINTON, M. D.

As probably the majority of the readers of the *ANTHROPOLOGIST* are aware, the *Congrès international des Américanistes* is of French origin, its first session having been held at Nancy in 1875. Since that date it has convened once every two years, except in one instance, when the cholera led to its postponement for one year. This explains why its sessions at present take place in years with even numbers instead of with odd.

As it is international in constitution, it has at different times assembled in Italy, Germany, Denmark, Belgium, France, and Spain. For the same reason its deliberations are conducted either in English, French, Spanish, German, or Italian, though French is the language generally adopted.

The session of 1888, in Berlin, was very successful, the amount of excellent scientific matter presented large, and the social features attractive. The volume of transactions, or *Compte Rendu*, which has since appeared of that session, contains 806 pages of material well worth the attention of students of the field to which the Congress devotes itself.

This field embraces several distinct sections. One is occupied with the pre-Columbian discovery of America; another with the history of its exploration and colonization; a third with the archæology of the continent, both quaternary and recent; a fourth with the ethnography and anthropology of the native tribes, and a fifth with their linguistics and mythology. The later history of America is not a part of the scheme of study.

So much for a general description of the body which assembled in Paris, at the rooms of the Society of Geography, Boulevard St. Germain, on the 18th day of October last. There were in all from eighty to a hundred members present; among them many well known as writers, travellers, and scholars. From Germany there were Professor Virchow, Dr. Hellmann, Dr. Paul Ehrenreich, Dr. Ed. Seler, Dr. Otto Stoll; from Italy, Professor Cora, of Turin, Borsari, of Naples, Grossi, of Genoa; from Spain, Señor Jiménez de la Espada,

the Duke of Veragua, Senator Fabié; from Costa Rica, Señor Manuel de Peralta, well known for his valuable publications of ancient documents; from Mexico, Dr. Altamirano, consul-general of his country in Paris, and a full-blood Aztec, Dr. Antonio Peñafiel; from Sweden, Dr. Martin, and many others whose names are familiar to readers on American ancient history. Of course the French contingent was the largest. I need only mention the president of the Congress, Professor de Quatrefages; the patron, Dom Pedro, ex-Emperor of Brazil, now a resident of Versailles; Prince Roland Bonaparte; the Marquis of Bassano, once ambassador of France to the United States; the Marquis of Nadaillac, the author of an excellent treatise on the archæology of America; the Count de Charencey, distinguished in American linguistics; the Baron de Baye, the Count de Marsy, the Marquis de Croizier, Judge Lucien Adam, M. de la Grasserie, Dr. Collignon, Alphonse Pinart, the Abbé Petitot, Professor Gaffarel, and many others. Especially should be mentioned the general secretary, M. Désiré Pector, consul of Nicaragua, whose devotion to his duties and uniform courtesy and kindness were always conspicuous.

Scientific sessions, with reading of papers and discussions, were held on the 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st. They were relieved by visits to the museums containing objects of interest to Americanists, and by receptions and other occasions for social intercourse.

This social feature, as might have been expected from the well-known hospitality of the French, was a prominent and delightful trait. On this occasion unusual, in fact unprecedented, honors were shown the Congress. For the first time in the history of scientific bodies assembling in Paris, the Congress was tendered official receptions both by the Municipal Council of Paris and by the President of the Republic, M. Carnot. The former was given in the magnificent apartments of the new Hotel de Ville, and the latter in the charming interior of the Palais de l'Elysée. President Carnot received personally, and each of the vice-presidents (among whom I had the honor of being counted) was presented to him in turn and enjoyed a short conversation with him. On either side of me stood Prince Bonaparte and the Marquis de Nadaillac, and it was a pleasant illustration of the harmonizing influence of science that these two distinguished members of parties not in sympathy with the present government of France found themselves for the first time in personal relations with the President of the Republic.

A sumptuous reception was also tendered the Congress by Prince

Bonaparte in his stately hotel on the Cours la Reine, and at the close of the week an official banquet took place in the Hotel des Sociétés Savantes. I need not include in this list the graceful private hospitality extended by M. De Quatrefages, the Marquis de Nadaillac, and others, which added to the pleasant reminiscences which many members bore away with them.

Along with all this, the scientific work was not neglected. During the first session an interesting discussion as to the origin of the name *America* was held. Some have thought that this word was brought back by Columbus on his last voyage, and is a form of the name of the *Amerisques*, a tribe near the coast of Vera Paz, or from the *Amarisonas*, a tribe near the shores of Venezuela. The matter received full attention, and the decision was reached quite positively that the usual account, that it was from the name of Amerigo Vespucci, is correct.

Some new particulars by Señor de Peralta were brought forward concerning the expedition of Balboa, and the date of his death was more accurately fixed as on January 15, 1519, instead of 1516, as is commonly taught.

In a discussion relating to the publication of the marginal notes in some of the books from the library of Columbus, now preserved in Seville, it was positively stated that these notes were not by the great navigator, but in another handwriting.

The voyages of Cortereal to the coast of Newfoundland were ably treated from original documents by M. Gaffarel.

During the second session M. Beauvois presented the arguments relating to the voyages of the Norsemen to the north Atlantic coast of America, and speculated on the influence they may have exerted on the native civilization. M. Charnay pointed out some analogies between the prayers of the ancient Aztecs to Quetzalcoatl and those of the Chinese to some of the Buddhistic divinities. He was inclined to think the resemblance was more than a coincidence.

At other sessions the Abbé Petitot gave a summary of Athapascan mythology as compared with that of the Old World. The Marquis de Nadaillac presented an admirable synopsis of recent discoveries concerning the most ancient remains of man in America. Mr. Henry Phillips, Jr., of Philadelphia, exhibited and described photographs of the Codex Poinsett, an Aztec manuscript of the fifteenth century, preserved in the library of the American Philosophical Society. M. Boban, the widely known antiquary, submitted for examination pho-

tographs of a number of Aztec Codices from the celebrated collection of M. Aubin, now in the possession of M. Goupil. Mrs. Nuttall sent an extremely well-prepared paper on a piece of ancient Mexican feather-work with a curious history.

Dr. Ed. Seler delivered an attractive address, illustrated by numerous colored drawings, of the ruins of Mitla, the material obtained during a recent personal visit. A number of specimens of the native airs of Guatemala were rendered on the piano by M. Bouret, formerly on the French legation in that country. They were nearly all in the major key of the scale, and on that account much doubt was thrown upon their authenticity. Probably they were of Spanish origin.

M. Dr. Hamy, director of the American Museum of the Trocadero, not only offered some valuable communications, but received the Congress at the museum, and displayed to its members the many remarkable and admirably arranged treasures in American archæology which he there has under his charge.

In the departments of ethnography and linguistics M. Lucien Adam presented three communications—one on the morphology of the pronouns in the Mosquito language; a second on the Rocouyenne and Boni-ouayana dialects of Guiana, showing them to be of the Carib stock reduced to the condition of a jargon, and a third on the Oyampi dialect spoken on the upper Oyapok river, which he shows to belong to the Tupi stock. M. A. Pinart had a paper on the dialects near the Isthmus of Panama; Dr. D. G. Brinton, of Philadelphia, one on the various tongues in Mexico and Guatemala, included under the terms Chontalli and Popoloca, and M. de la Grassie one upon the grammar of a South American tongue.

There was besides these quite a long list of communications assigned for the *séance libre*, at which, unfortunately, I could not be present, as I was obliged to sail for New York a day before the Congress closed.

There were a number of books and objects of archæology exhibited and presented to the Congress. Among the donations was conspicuous a handsomely bound set of the AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST.

The officers of the Society elected at this session were as follows:
President.—M. de Quatrefages.

Vice-Presidents.—M. Dr. Ign. Altamirano, Mexico; M. le Prince R. Bonaparte, France; M. Dr. D. G. Brinton, United States; M. Prof. G. Cora, Italy; M. Fabre, Canada; M. Dr. E.-T. Hamy,

France ; M. Dr. G. Hellmann, Germany ; M. le Marquis de Nadail-lac, France ; M. le duc de Veragua, Spain.

Members of Council.—M. L. Adam, France ; M. E.-S. Dahlgren, Sweden ; M. Dr. E. Morado, Cuba ; M. Dr. D'Ornellas, Peru ; M. M.-M. Peralta, Costa Rica ; M. Phillips, United States ; M. le Baron De Rio Branco, Brazil ; M. V. Schmidt, Denmark ; M. Dr. Serrurier, Holland ; M. le chevalier J. Da Silva Amado, Portugal ; M. Dr. O. Stoll, Switzerland ; M. Dr. Triana, Colombia.

Secretary General.—M. D. Pector.

Secretaries.—M. Deniker, France ; M. Prof. V. Grossi, Italy ; M. Dr. E. Seler, Germany ; M. Dr. Verneau, France.

It will be seen from this list how thoroughly international is the Congress.

The next place of meeting was the theme of a lively discussion. Invitations were received from Philadelphia, Buenos Ayres, Genoa, and Spain. The last mentioned was accepted ; the city not defined, but probably it will be either Seville or Huelvas.

In this brief sketch I have omitted to mention a number of the communications presented, but the omission is of minor importance, as in less than six months it is expected that the complete *Compte Rendu* of the Congress will be published by the widely known house of E. Leroux & Co., Paris.

THE FUEGIANS.—“Jahgan. This is the name given to a tribe of Fuegians whom we know from the expedition and reports of Captain Bove, and who frequent with their canoes a roadstead south of Beagle channel. They go naked, except a little skin on the haunches, and anoint their bodies with whale oil mixed with red ochre. Thus they say they protect themselves from cold. They live on the products of the hunt and fishing, which they carry on by means of several kinds of darts. Their dwellings are little huts, but they cannot be called settled. A man usually has two wives, one older and the other younger. They are of good disposition and obliging, but lay much stress on their own customs and laws. The women are more intelligent and industrious, the men more talkative and shrewd. They have no true religion, but certain ideas of spirits and certain rites in which the men alone share.” (*Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana*, Sept., 1889, ser. 3, v. 2 : 9, p. 785.)

FOOD OF THE NATIVES ON THE CONGO.—M. Le Clément de St. Marcq writes from Basoko to "Le Mouvement Géographique" (May 25, 1890) as follows:

"The staple food of the natives of this region (between Stanley Falls and Kassongo) is the plantain, which they eat boiled or roasted. With fish, it is almost their sole nourishment. At Wamongo they have only fish, but obtain bananas from the caravans. They exact them in payment for the trans-shipment of the canoes. Elsewhere, near Riba-Riba, they exchange their fish for Indian corn, which comes in great quantities from Kasuku, where, on the other hand, the banana is not found. At Riba-Riba manioc is cultivated on a large scale. . . . The sweet potato is found in abundance at Kibongo. . . . The peanut is extremely rare everywhere and is only found at the large Arab stations. Rice is found only at the Arab centers and only the rich Arabs eat it. Chickens and goats are hardly ever seen among the natives; the Arabs and their followers alone raise them. At Kibongo and Riba-Riba are found the pine-apple, the papaw, the mango, the citron, and the sweet lemon, erroneously called the orange."

MYTHOLOGIC TALES FROM THE INDIANS OF THE NORTHWEST COAST.—J. A. Jacobsen has just published a second installment of the mythological tales of the northwestern Indians ("Das Ausland," vol. 63, No. 22—"Nordwestamerikanische Sagen").

The stories are nine in number, as follows:

"How the Indians learned the mask dances."

"How the Haidas learned to make totem-posts."

"How the god Kwannemkiloko changed his enemy into a deer."

"The mouth-distorting spirit."

"The thunder god Seiux."

"The origin of the human race."

"The deluge of the Aht Indians."

"How the Indians on the east coast of Vancouver's Island got fire."

"How the Indians learned whale-fishing."